

ABSTRACT

The invention provides an input support method and apparatus having the following merits in a communication-type navigation system. That is, when at least one character relevant to, for example, a destination is inputted from a navigation apparatus to make a search in a server system, it is possible to minimize time spent in waiting for a response from the server system. Accordingly, communication time is shortened, and a pleasant environment for input operation is realized by making the most of information inputted by a user. In the input support method in a communication-type navigation system, a navigation apparatus (1) and a server system (4) are connected via a communication network (3). The input support method is comprised of the following steps: a first step of obtaining candidate characters for next input and the number of candidates pertaining to an input character string from the server system (4) via the communication network (3), and storing them into a cache memory (14) provided in the navigation apparatus (1); a second step of, at least when an input character string is updated at the navigation apparatus, searching the cache memory for candidate characters following the updated input character string and the number of candidates pertaining to the updated input character string; and a third step of, when the candidate characters following the updated input character string and the number of candidates pertaining to the updated character

string have not been stored in the cache memory as yet, transmitting the updated input character string to the server system.